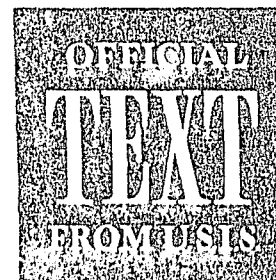




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UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE - AMERICAN EMBASSY, LONDON



Saturday,
November 23,
1963.

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR BRUCE ON THE DEATH OF
PRESIDENT KENNEDY

The following is a statement made last night by Mr. David K.E. Bruce, United States Ambassador at the Court of St. James, following the assassination yesterday of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas, Texas.

A foul assassination has removed from the world's scene one of the most interesting and significant of modern statesmen.

President Kennedy was notable as a political figure, but even more as a personality. The uniqueness of his interests, coupled with an amazing zest for all facets of life were entirely extraordinary.

He had an abiding passion for the welfare of his fellow men. His intellectual brilliance and personal charm made him delightful as a companion, but he never permitted their exercise to divert him from his chief objective, which was the furtherance of the well-being of humanity and the preservation of peace.

One cannot help, in view of the circumstances surrounding his death, but be reminded of the reflection of Jefferson Davis, former President of the Confederate States, years after the murder of Lincoln by a fanatic: "Next to the destruction of the Confederacy, the death of Abraham Lincoln was the darkest day the South has ever known."

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organized in the span of a few hours, with tributes so numerous.

There was much to be done during the night, which I felt would never end.

November 23, 1963 - Saturday

E and I went to London Airport to join Lee and Stash, and see her off on the Pan American morning flight. Stash is leaving tomorrow, not wishing to intrude on the first meeting of the sisters. Neither had slept a wink. They both loved the President, as he did them. No matter how busy he was, he telephoned and wrote them frequently; the mutual devotion of the sisters is proverbial, and I am told that Stash was the President's preferred friend.

He rode back with us in our car, and recounted many touching anecdotes about J.F.K.'s warmth, gayety, and magnanimity.

At the office, I found even the pavement crowded with people waiting to sign the book. They were of all classes, many in tears. Our staff ~~has handled~~ ^{is handling} everything with efficiency and precision. The newspapers in the United Kingdom have unanimously expressed genuine sorrow over the President's death, and spoken of him as the "undisputed leader of the Free World." The atmosphere of grief here may perhaps be even greater than at home, where differences over Civil Rights seem to have induced some citizens to intemperate and disgraceful utterances of satisfaction over this heinous deed.

I spent most of the day coping with telegrams, letters, and telephone calls, conferring about innumerable details. The Soviet Ambassador visited me, and was especially eloquent in regrets. Washington finally decided that all Ambassadors were to remain at their posts; also, President Johnson announced that, contrary to custom, none were to submit their resignations. Consequently, a mild euphoria will reign, at least temporarily, in our foreign Missions.

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The roster of States ~~are~~ intending to attend the funeral is a testimonial to the power and personality of the President. From the United Kingdom, Prince Philip, the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, Jo Grimond and others will go. General de Gaulle will, somewhat to the surprise of all, represent France. From every quarter of the globe there will be high-ranking delegations.

The United States Government has decreed thirty days of official mourning. E and I have cancelled our Christmas party, as well as lunches, dinners, and other receptions we had scheduled for the first half of December. Nor shall we be present at performances of the ballet, theatre, and entertainments of any sort until after Christmas.

The Palace has decreed seven days of court mourning.

The Chancery remains crowded with streams of people signing in the several books we have made available to them. Some leave little bunches of violets, others sprays of flowers, which we have put in the lobby watercourse. At the end of the day, many workmen in their stained clothes, stopped by directly from their jobs to inscribe their names.

Stash came out late this afternoon to see us. He is as if pole-axed; I feel so sorry for him.

The Marines are wearing black armbands, most civilians in the Embassy are dressed in black, or, at the least, in the case of men, have black neckties. The American flags are draped in crepe.

Television and radio broadcasts featuring the late President are frequent and excellent. The Daily Telegraph has announced the opening of a fund to erect a statue in London to his memory; it has started the subscriptions with 1000 pounds of its own, but is asking that no others exceed one pound an individual.

Memorial church services are almost too numerous for us to provide representation by Embassy personnel.

Sunday

Johnston 1874

by the Prime Minister and
Selwyn Lloyd, Harold Wilson and

E, Nicky and I went to 10 Downing Street, to take sherry with the Douglas-s. The P.M. who has a winning way with children, will always be unforgettable in my memory, for he led the twelve-year old to the dining room, and asked me to select a soft or hard drink.

We made a short tour of the renovated house. There are many valuable
res and pieces of furniture in it. I thought the dining-room chairs needed
cement--they are more appropriate for a business office. The PM told me
op calling him "Prime Minister", and that he wished to see me after his
n from Washington.

put in time
Then I ~~stayed~~ at the office.

E and I went to the airport this afternoon to see Prince Philip, the PM and wife, Harold Wilson, the Devonshires, and other British off for Washington BOAC jet.

Immediately after their departure, we transferred over to where Queen Erika of Greece was to change planes. I found her agreeable, and easy in conversation, which lasted the better part of an hour before she boarded the Am plane. I had also a useful talk with Venizelos, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister.

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There were ~~innumerable~~ ^{innumerable} matters to attend to at home tonight, and the

telephone was rarely out of use. The slaying of the suspected killer, Oswald, by a Dallas night-club proprietor Ruby (Rubinstein) was sensational news. It hardly seems possible that even the Dallas police could have been so negligent. The chief of its force smugly announced afterwards. "Now the case is settled." He had previously, in defiance of all canons of law, proclaimed his belief in Oswald's guilt. This last blatancy will be viewed in Great Britain as a travesty on police responsibility, and will be bitterly denounced.

The depth of feeling, expressed in messages, over the President's death is surprising. We received a letter tonight from a Scottish friend, who had never met him, ending with a quotation: "Esmond thought of the cousin now galloping on the North Road to inform him, who was Earl of Arran yesterday that he was Duke of Hamilton today, and of a thousand great schemes, hopes, ambitions, that were alive in the gallant heart, beating a few hours since, and now in a little dust, quiescent."

Sir Winston was, as always, punctilious ^{about his communications} ~~about his communications~~ on the President's death. He wrote at once to Jackie, saying:

"My dear Mrs. Kennedy,

My Wife and I were shocked and grieved at the death of your illustrious Husband. We viewed with admiration his courage, humanity and high statesmanship. I firmly believe that the work he accomplished in these too short years has carried him to the level of the great Presidents of the United States. History will not forget him.

We send you and your family our true sympathy, and our hopes that the memories of your Husband's transcending services to America and to the world may in time soften the cruel blow you have suffered.

In your grief and bereavement, please do not feel that you should reply to this letter.

Yours very sincerely,
Winston S. Churchill"

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He also made a public statement:

"This monstrous act has taken from us a great statesman and a wise and valiant man. The loss to the United States and to the world is incalculable. Those who come after Mr. Kennedy must strive the more to achieve the ideals of World peace and human happiness and dignity to which his Presidency was dedicated."

Randolph Churchill telephones several times a day; he once knew the President well, and, as he is easily shatterable, this tragedy seems to have utterly confounded him.

November 25, 1963 - Monday

I could hardly make my way through the orderly press of people this morning in front of our Grosvenor Square building.

E and I went to the House of Commons at 2 o'clock to hear the speeches in memoriam scheduled there. Since a question period intervened, it was not until 3:30 that the subject of President Kennedy was broached.

The order of business was on the motion:

"Assassination of President Kennedy: That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying Her Majesty to be graciously pleased to express to the President of the United States of America the shock and deep sorrow with which this House has learned of the death of President Kennedy; and to convey their sense of the loss which this country and the Commonwealth have sustained, and their profound sympathy with Mrs. Kennedy and the family of the late President, and with the Government and people of the United States of America."

Rab Butler led off with a graceful and grave utterance perfect for the occasion. In Wilson's absence, Gordon Walker paid apposite homage. Mr. Wade spoke, and well, for the Liberals. Harold Macmillan, making his first appearance in the House since his operation, delivered just the sort of appreciation demanded by the occasion. When he entered the Chamber there was muffled applause from all sides. Sir Thomas Moore, Father of the House, in the absence of Sir Winston

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Churchill declaimed with emotion.

Immediately after the speeches, the House adjourned as a mark of respect to Kennedy. For solemnity and dignity this was an event difficult, if not impossible, to match in another legislative body.

We went almost directly from St. Stephen's to services at St. Peter's Church on Eaton Square, where Bishop Bayne, soon to be retired as American Episcopal Bishop in Europe, delivered an informal but excellent discourse on President Kennedy.

I devoted the rest of the evening to reading messages, and answering telephone calls at home.

November 26, 1963 - Tuesday

At 11:15 E and I were in place at Westminster Cathedral for a grand Roman Catholic Memorial Mass, presided over by the ancient and ethereal Cardinal Heald. We were given prie-dieu in front of the congregation. It was a beautiful and emotional ceremony, attended by a hushed, attentive, and eclectic audience, that filled every cranny of the edifice.

Like yesterday, I lunched at the office, dazedly gazing at a tidal flow of commiserations.

Sent a message of sympathy on Saturday to Jackie Kennedy, and another to her Mother-in-law, Mrs. Joseph P. Kennedy. Jackie has behaved, throughout this desperate ordeal, as one expected, with courage and elegance; indeed, the words that come to one's mind most readily in connection with this couple are "elegance and style" in their broadest context. Amongst other accomplishments, they made the White House a gathering place for what was best in American cultural life as it had not been since the time of Theodore Roosevelt.

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Joe Kennedy must be the saddest of men; the reverse of fortune causes

him to live on, when ordinarily "in peace sons bury their fathers; in war fathers bury their sons."

Sir Michael Adeane called me to say ~~that~~ the Queen's doctor had advised her against attending the services at St. Paul's. She will be represented by Prince Philip. The Queen is desirous, however, of having a ceremony on the same day at 10:45 a.m. in St. George's Chapel, Windsor. She has indicated her wish to have US servicemen stationed within a reasonable distance invited to this service. They would be seated in the nave of the chapel, and it is believed there would be sufficient accommodations for 250 to 300 of them.

A narwhal tusk that I bought sight unseen for £50 from a lady in Perthshire arrived today in perfect condition. It is a little over six feet high. It had been given to her father by a whaling captain.

I saw James Holburn, of the Glasgow Herald, this afternoon. He thinks the possibility of a Conservative victory at the General Election is by no means foreclosed, although if it were held at the present time Labour would win.

Pamela and Michael Berry had dinner with us tonight. They are busily organizing the campaign launched in the Sunday Telegraph to raise between ten and thirty thousand pounds for a memorial statue to President Kennedy. They would like to have it placed somewhere overlooking the Thames, but in order to erect it anywhere in London they must first obtain permission from the London County Council and other governmental clearances.

November 27, 1963 - Wednesday

Max Kohnstamm flew over from Brussels to see me this afternoon. Like his colleagues in the Action Committee, he is anxiously awaiting the announcement

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by President Johnson of the lines of his foreign policy. I do not myself have any apprehensions in this regard. The new President has steadfastly supported our policies in the past, and I do not believe he will institute any startling innovations. I hope he will persuade Mac Bundy to remain on at his post, for this would be the greatest assurance for continuity.

The Prime Minister was due back at the London Airport from Washington at 8:00 o'clock tonight, so I went out to meet him. When I arrived there, I found the plane was unable to land because of dense fog, and had been diverted to Manchester. The drive back to town was unpleasant because of fog patches, but was nothing compared with the pea-soup into which we plunged at the entrance of Regents Park. I had spent most of the day answering letters of sympathy.

November 28, 1963 - Thursday

I went this morning to the Thanksgiving Service at the American Protestant Chapel in King's Weigh House Church, Duke Street. The U. S. Navy leases the premises for its services. The Old Testament lesson was read by Rear Admiral Matter, and the New Testament Lesson by Bill Channing, President of the American Chamber of Commerce in London. ^{There} was a good sermon by Commander Ogelsby of the U. S. Navy Chaplain Corps. I read the Thanksgiving Proclamation ~~that had~~ ~~been~~ prepared by President Kennedy before his death. It was:

At the end, I said "These are noble words, expressing noble thoughts, in a content and style of which President Kennedy was a great master."

We had some time ago asked the Duke and Duchess of Windsor with other friends for Thanksgiving lunch. Under the circumstances, we cancelled all guests except themselves and the O'Shaughnessys. Windsor looked well, much younger than his age, and seemed deeply stirred by the President's death. He had known him

PROCLAMATION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Washington, Nov. 25--Following is the text of the late President Kennedy's Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 21) Proclamation:

For three centuries ago, in Jamestown settled in Virginia on the Atlantic coast, the first of the English colonies began. At that time, the settlers were struggling against the hardships of a new land, and they were often in danger of starvation. It was in this time of need that the Pilgrims received help from the Native Americans, and they learned to grow crops and to live in the new land. This day, Thanksgiving, is a day to remember the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and to give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens.

It was the first year of our Nation's history, and the first Thanksgiving. The Pilgrims gave thanks for the many blessings they had received from God and from the Native Americans. They gave thanks for the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and for the many blessings they had received from God. This day, Thanksgiving, is a day to remember the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and to give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens.

And it was in the midst of America's tragic civil war, President Lincoln proclaimed the last Thursday of November as a day to renew our gratitude to America's "bountiful God," for our "national strength and wisdom," and for all our "blessings and mercies."

Now, more than ever, since the first Thanksgiving, we give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens. We give thanks for the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and for the many blessings they have received from God. This day, Thanksgiving, is a day to remember the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and to give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens.

Today we are a nation of nearly 200 million souls, stretching from the Gulf of Mexico to the Pacific and north toward the Arctic, a nation enjoying the fruits of an ever-extending agriculture and industry and achieving standards of living unknown in previous history. We have our humble thanks for this. Yet, as our power and growth, so has our peril. Today we give our thanks, not only for the blessings of peace and freedom, but also for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens. This day, Thanksgiving, is a day to remember the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and to give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens.

Let us, therefore, proclaim our gratitude to Providence for America's blessings--and let us humbly thank God for America's blessings--and let us give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens. This day, Thanksgiving, is a day to remember the help and friendship of the Native Americans, and to give thanks for the many blessings we have received from God and from our fellow citizens.

Now, therefore, I, John F. Kennedy, President of the United States of America, in accordance with the joint resolution of the Congress (H.R. 10, 1941; S. 10, 1941; 52 Stat. 1777 (U.S.C. 1777)), hereby proclaim Thanksgiving, November 21, 1961, as a day of national thanksgiving.

Given at the City of Washington, this 25th day of November, 1961.

349 Clatham Rd
Rochdale
Lancs
England

Dear Caroline,

I am sending
an English ICF note,
please get something for
our Birthday, I am
terribly sorry about your
Daddy, we all liked
him very much. When

I get the rest of my
Christmas savings I will
send your mother some
flowers, I think she's been
very brave, I shall remember
your Birthday always.

I am ten but when
I was six I didn't really
like writing letters, so you

needn't write, but just
remember lots of people love
you very much.

Please keep your
Mummy and little John,
love for your
sixth birthday.

We hope to move
soon, but I won't forget
you, or what your Daddy
did for all children.

Charles Peter
Norbury